

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 QUITO 01675 311511 Z

43

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 /026 W

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R 311302 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY QUITO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7037

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 1675

EXDIS

E. O. 11652: XGDS-4 DECLAS 3-29-93

TAGS: CPRS, PFOR, EFIN, EC (STROUTH, HOWARD)

SUBJECT: AMCIT HOWARD STROUTH

REF: STATE 057931

1. EMBASSY CONVEYED TO STROUTH ON MARCH 30 DECISIONS NOT TO INTERCEDE WITH GOE AT THIS TIME AND NOT TO INTERFERE WITH GOE COURT PROCEDURES BY PROVIDING WRITTEN LEGAL OPINION . WE AGAIN ADVISED HIM TO OBSERVE GOE LEGAL PROCEDURES TO PRESERVE HIS ACCESS TO USG PROTECTION IN FUTURE.

2. STROUTH EXPRESSED HIS DISAPPOINTMENT WITH DECISION NOT TO JOIN HIS CURRENT EFFORTS TO DISCOURAGE GOE FROM BRINGING PRESENT AND FUTURE TAX CLAIMS AGAINST HIM. HE COMMENTED THAT IN VIEW OF OUR FAILURE TO COMMIT OURSELVES IN ADVANCE AND IN WRITING TO WHAT ACTIONS (INCLUDING SANCTIONS) WE WOULD TAKE IN EVENT OF CONFISCATION, HE WILL HAVE TO DISCOUNT IN HIS CALCULATIONS WHAT EMBASSY MIGHT DO.

3. STROUTH NOTED CONTRAST BETWEEN EMBASSY PRESENTATION AND DEPARTMENT LETTER OF MARCH 15 TO SENATOR THURMOND NOW IN HIS POSSESSION. HE TERMED CURRENT INSTRUCTIONS AS A RETRACTION. WE POINTED OUT THAT PREPARATION OF LEGAL OPINION WAS EXPEDITED TO MEET HIS STATED DEADLINE AND THAT DEPARTMENT AT SEVERAL POINTS IN OPINION STATED ITS NEED FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION. MATTER HAS REMAINED UNDER REVIEW IN INTERIM.

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PAGE 02 QUITO 01675 311511 Z

4. WE WARNED STROUTH NOT TO USE MARCH 15 LETTER AROUND TOWN SINCE WHEN GOE ASKS EMBASSY ABOUT THE MATTER WE WOULD HAVE TO INFORM GOE WE WERE NOT INTERVENING IN THE MATTER. THIS WOULD BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE TO ACHIEVEMENT OF HIS OWN GOALS. STROUTH SEEMED CONCERNED AT THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH A DENIAL, BUT MADE NO SECRET OF HIS VIEW THAT THE LETTER COULD BE VERY USEFUL IN PERSUADING SELECTED GOE OFFICIALS AND THE COURT NOT TO PROCEED WITH THE TAX CASE, AS IT IS NOT WORTH THE TROUBLE IT WOULD CAUSE THEM.

5. EMBASSY IS GRATEFUL FOR REFTEL INSTRUCTIONS, WHICH HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO EXTRACTING USG FROM AN ENTERPRISE THAT LOOKS MORE AND MORE DUBIOUS. EMBASSY TODAY RECEIVED CONFIRMATION FROM RANKING OFFICIAL IN MINISTRY OF FINANCE THAT TAX CREDITS GIVEN UNDER DECREE 475 CAN BE USED TO PAY ANY TAX AND ARE NEGOTIABLE INSTRUMENTS.
BURNS

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** EXDIS

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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